

Be Prepared for a Flu Pandemic



Macomb County Health Department





You might find it helpful to keep important information handy.

Write it below.

Primary health-care provider

Name _____

Phone number _____

Health plan

Plan name _____

ID number _____

Phone number _____

State public health department

Phone number _____

Local public health department

Phone number _____

Pharmacy

Name _____

Phone number _____

An emergency contact

Name _____

Phone number _____

Other important numbers

Please read:

Talk to your health-care provider! This handbook is not a substitute for the advice of a qualified health-care provider. • The photos in this handbook are of models. The models have no relation to the issues presented.



Contents

About pandemic flu

What it is	4
Possible effects	6
Avian flu	7
Preparations	8
Vaccines and medications	10

How you can get ready

Yearly flu shots	12
Protection from germs	13
Good hygiene	14
Food safety	16
Precautions with animals	17
Emergency kit	18
Medical history chart	20
Keeping informed	21

Other tips

Common-good decisions	22
Community planning	23
Safe travel	24
Backup plans	25
Healthy habits	26
Dealing with flu symptoms	27
Talking to loved ones	28

Planning checklist

Resources

Experts believe a flu pandemic is likely at some point in the future.

This handbook can help you prepare. It provides basic information about pandemic flu, and space for recording ideas so you'll be ready.

Taking common sense steps can help you minimize the effects

of a flu pandemic in your
family and community.
This handbook covers:

- what pandemic flu is
- information on how to prepare for a possible flu pandemic
- tips on staying informed and working together with family, community and authorities.

There is also a checklist to help you plan. You can follow the recommendations in this handbook, and keep it for your future reference.

**There's a lot you can
do to be prepared for
a flu pandemic!**



What is a flu pandemic?

It's a global outbreak of influenza—a respiratory disease.

A pandemic is the spread of a single disease.

During a flu pandemic, the disease:

- spreads quickly from person to person
- affects many people in a short period of time
- may spread around the world in months—or days
- may cause serious illness and many deaths.

Influenza (the “flu”) is caused by a virus.

The virus infects the nose, throat and lungs. An infection can range from mild to life-threatening. The flu can lead to dangerous complications, such as pneumonia or dehydration (dangerous loss of body fluids). It can also make chronic problems worse, including asthma, diabetes and heart disease.

A flu virus has the potential to cause a pandemic.

There are many flu viruses, and they continually change. Usually the changes are slow and predictable. But if a flu virus changes a lot, it could result in a new kind of flu. Nobody would be immune to (able to fight) the new virus, so everybody would be at risk. If the virus becomes able to spread easily between people, a pandemic could occur.



Pandemic flu is not the same as seasonal flu or avian flu.

Seasonal flu goes around every year, usually in the fall and winter. It is not a completely new virus. Compared to pandemic flu, seasonal flu generally:

- strikes fewer people, since some already have immunity from being exposed to a similar flu virus in past years
- may be prevented by getting a yearly flu shot
- puts fewer people at risk for fatal complications.

By contrast, pandemic flu would be caused by a new virus. It could strike anyone and cause life-threatening complications in all groups of people—young and old alike.

Avian flu is an illness that occurs naturally in birds. See page 7 for details.

There were 3 flu pandemics in the 20th century.

All caused serious, widespread harm.

- The most severe pandemic was in 1918, when the “Spanish flu” killed tens of millions of people around the world. About 500,000 died in the U.S. alone.
- In 1957, the “Asian flu” killed about 2 million worldwide and about 70,000 in the U.S.
- The most recent flu pandemic was the least severe—the “Hong Kong flu” in 1968. Up to 1 million people died around the world. About 34,000 died in the U.S.

How likely is another flu pandemic?

Experts believe another pandemic is very likely. However, they do not know exactly when it will occur. A flu pandemic:

- may start without warning, in any country, at any time
- may spread quickly, especially because modern travel means the virus can be carried easily from country to country
- may also spread quickly because many areas are densely populated
- may come in multiple waves over several months. Different communities or groups of people may be affected by different waves. Each outbreak in a community may last 6-8 weeks.

It is estimated that millions could become ill

in the U.S. during the next pandemic. If the pandemic is severe, it could kill almost 2 million people in the U.S. If it is mild, an estimated 200,000 people could die. Compare this with the effects of seasonal flu, which leads to about 36,000 deaths in the U.S. each year.



What effects could a flu pandemic have?

Illness could be widespread.

Some experts estimate that up to one-third of the world population could become sick during a pandemic. This would have serious effects. For example, sick people should stay at home, and others may stay home to care for them. Having so many people at home would likely cause big changes in daily life. Widespread illness could also cause feelings of grief, anxiety and stress.

Services could be disrupted.

If many people are ill at once, it could affect:

- public transportation
- communications
- schools
- businesses such as banks, stores and restaurants
- utilities
- medical care
- police and fire departments.

Community resources may be overburdened.

For example, hospitals may be unable to care for all the people who need medical attention. There may not be enough beds, staff or equipment available. As a result, people may be encouraged to treat themselves at home.

Or stores may run out of supplies—and not be able to get new deliveries for some time.

A pandemic could have a severe economic impact.

It is estimated that total costs could be in the billions of dollars.

An influenza pandemic could have a devastating impact around the world. But we can take steps to minimize the impact on ourselves, our families and our communities.

Avian flu

—or “bird flu”—is not the same as pandemic flu. But it may be the source of the next pandemic. In fact, all three 20th century pandemics were related to flu viruses that originally came from birds.



One type of avian flu has some potential

to lead to a pandemic: the H5N1 virus. So far, the H5N1 virus is found mostly in birds. Key facts are:

- It has caused serious outbreaks in domestic birds, such as chickens and ducks. These incidents started in Asia.
- Bird flu is spreading to birds outside of Asia. Wild birds may carry the H5N1 virus as they migrate.
- There have been some cases of the H5N1 virus spreading to other kinds of animals, such as pigs and tigers. This spread beyond birds is a cause for concern—it may mean that the virus will be able to change so it can infect humans easily as well.

Some humans have been infected

with H5N1 bird flu. Virtually all of them were infected by direct contact with domestic birds. About half of the people in reported cases died.

But the virus does not yet spread easily from person to person. However, if it changes so that it can spread quickly between people, a pandemic could occur.

Some effects of avian flu in humans are:

- typical seasonal flu symptoms, such as fever, fatigue, cough, sore throat and body aches
- eye infections and light sensitivity
- life-threatening complications such as pneumonia or acute respiratory distress (breathing problems due to lung damage).

Disease experts are studying the H5N1 virus

for changes. They are tracking the progress of the disease in animals and humans around the world. They are also tracking other flu viruses.

The H5N1 virus may lead to the next pandemic

—but it may not. A different virus could appear that causes severe flu in people and spreads quickly.

No matter what virus causes a flu pandemic, the same basic steps can help us prepare.



We can all help prepare.

Being prepared is the best response to the threat of pandemic flu! Many of these steps will also help in the event of other emergencies, such as natural disasters or terrorism.

A pandemic cannot be predicted exactly.

Experts don't know when it will occur until it starts. They also can't yet say how long it will last or how severe it will be. The severity of the pandemic will depend on the virus that causes it.

There are simple steps we can all take right now.

It's important to:

- understand how flu spreads
- learn how to help prevent infection
- practice healthy habits
- stay informed
- prepare an emergency kit
- be ready to cooperate with authorities in times of emergency.

Pandemic preparation plans are underway.

Governments around the world are getting ready. For example, U.S. federal authorities are:

- stockpiling vaccines and medications
- supporting research to produce new vaccines and medications
- establishing effective public health guidelines
- monitoring viruses around the world
- working to detect outbreaks and responding to them quickly
- helping state, local and tribal authorities develop pandemic flu response plans
- setting up systems for sharing emergency health information.

Being prepared can help give you confidence and peace of mind.



States and communities are also preparing for pandemic flu.

Each state has an emergency plan. Your state's plan may include:

- strategies for mass immunization (vaccination) of people in a given area
- increasing an area's ability to continue essential services (such as medical care) and respond to developing problems (such as running low on food and water)
- organizing cooperative efforts between law enforcement, utilities, public health personnel, local health-care organizations, hospitals, emergency management officials and elected officials.

Businesses are also encouraged to prepare.

Employers' plans may include:

- deciding how to continue business during a pandemic
- having an emergency communications plan for contacting employees
- having flexible work schedules
- arranging for employees to work from home if possible
- setting policies for sick leave and compensation
- having guidelines for healthy hygiene on the job.

It's important to consider how you'll handle any loss of income that might result from not being able to work.

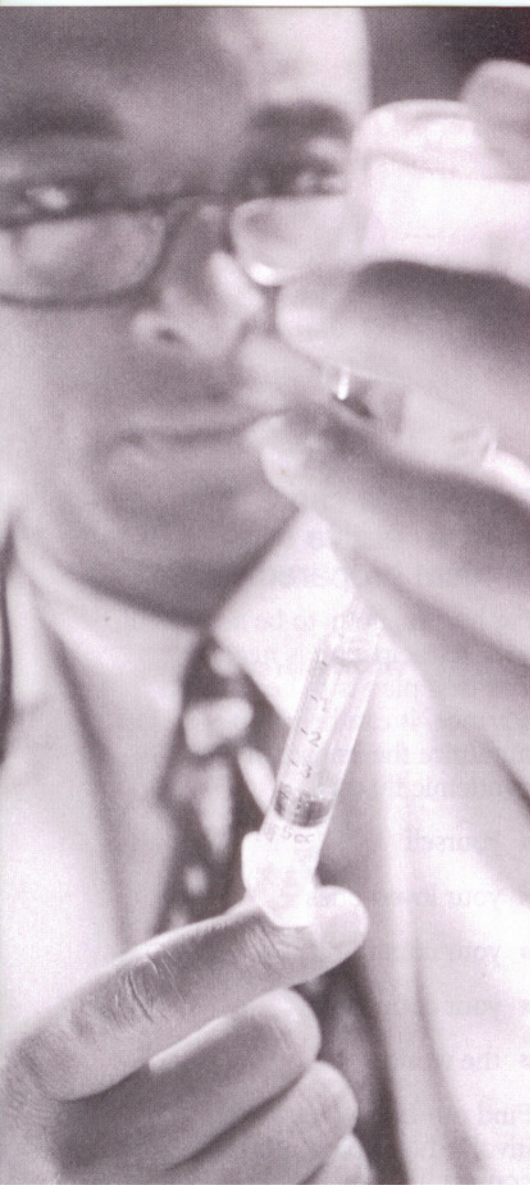
Individuals can play an active role in local preparedness.

For health efforts to be successful, your participation is needed! The best plan is to be ready in advance. It can help you minimize the impact of pandemic flu on:

- yourself
- your loved ones
- your community
- your country
- the world.

Find out how you can get involved (see page 30 for contact information).

Notes



Vaccines and antiviral medications

are useful tools for protecting people from the flu and flu-related problems.

A vaccine helps the body become immune.

It helps the body learn how to fight off a specific disease. For example, a person who gets a seasonal flu shot will be much less likely to be infected with that season's flu. (See page 12 for more.)

Vaccines help protect against existing viruses.

For example, a seasonal flu vaccine is created for the current flu viruses in circulation. It would not work against viruses that are brand new.

There is not yet a vaccine for pandemic flu.

That's because the next pandemic flu virus has not been identified. Once the virus is known, a vaccine can be created to match as closely as possible. But making and testing vaccines for new viruses may take months. So the U.S. is already preparing to produce and distribute the pandemic flu vaccine as soon as possible once the virus is known. Experts are also researching ways to make vaccines more quickly.

Some potential vaccines are being developed.

To get a head start, experts are planning vaccines for viruses they believe may lead to pandemic flu. For example, since the H5N1 avian flu virus may change so that it can spread easily between people, authorities are already working on vaccines against it.



Antiviral medications help treat the flu.

These medications:

- help reduce flu symptoms in infected people
- may help make infected people less contagious
- may decrease the risk of flu in healthy people who are exposed to people with the disease.

Antiviral medications are being developed to fight pandemic flu.

It is not known whether existing antivirals will work against pandemic flu. Not all antiviral medications work against all viruses. But the government is stockpiling existing antiviral medications just in case.

Stockpiling your own antiviral medications is not recommended.

Here's why:

- It depletes the national supply. Then there might not be enough medication for people who need it the most.
- The medication may not work against the pandemic flu virus.
- The medication may not work if it's stored incorrectly.
- You should not take medication without a health-care provider's OK. There could be serious side effects.

During a pandemic,

vaccines and medications may be limited—or not yet available. Authorities may give any available vaccines or medications first to the people who need them most. It's important to help by complying with these decisions. Highest priority might be given to:

- people who perform essential services, such as health-care providers or public safety workers
- people at high risk for complications, such as older people or children.

Get a yearly flu shot!

It's the best way to protect yourself from seasonal flu. And being in the best possible health could be helpful if a flu pandemic starts.



A yearly flu shot helps protect against the flu for that season.

It does not help protect you from pandemic or avian flu. But it's still a good idea to get a flu shot every year to help yourself stay healthy.

It's best to get the shot early in the season—in October or November.

The flu season typically runs from about November to March. If you don't get a shot in the fall, it can still help to get one later. Check with your health-care provider.

A yearly shot is especially recommended for people at high risk.

These include:

- adults age 50 and older
- children 6-23 months old
- people with long-term conditions such as diabetes or heart disease
- women who will be more than 3 months pregnant during flu season
- people with weakened immune systems (such as from HIV/AIDS)
- people who live in nursing homes or long-term care facilities.

Side effects of a shot—if any—are usually very mild.

Serious side effects are rare. You cannot get the flu from a flu shot.

Read the Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) for each shot you get. Your health-care provider is required to give you this statement.

A nasal spray vaccine may also be available.

It is only for healthy people ages 5-49. Certain people should not get this vaccine. Ask your health-care provider what's right for you.

Questions to ask your health-care provider:

Find out if your family's vaccinations are up-to-date. Use the chart on page 20 to keep track.

It's helpful to know how the flu spreads

and how you can protect yourself from germs.



Flu germs spread mainly through coughs and sneezes.

These can spray droplets through the air and:

- into the mouths or noses of people nearby
- onto surfaces that people touch before touching their nose, mouth or eyes.

People with the flu can also leave the flu virus on things they touch if they have flu germs on their hands (for example, right after using a tissue).

Infection can be passed before a sick person has signs or symptoms.

Flu symptoms may not show up for a day or so. So, a person could have the flu and not know it. But he or she could still pass the flu virus to others.

Be careful around people who are sick.

Avoid those invisible flu germs! Try to stay at least 3 feet away from a person who is coughing or sneezing. Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth. Wash your hands often to prevent any germs on your hands from getting into your body.

If you are sick, act responsibly.

To avoid spreading germs, stay home from work, school or other outings. As much as possible, keep your distance from family and loved ones until you are well again. It's a good idea to have sick children stay home, too. (See page 27 for more on flu treatment.)

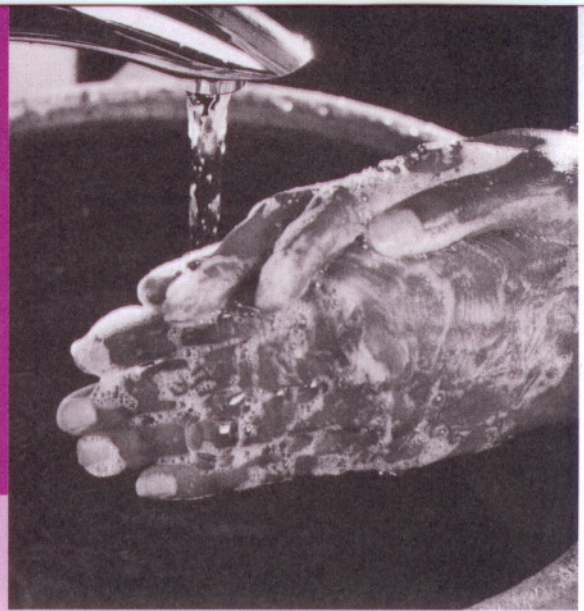
Practice cough and sneeze etiquette.

If you are about to cough or sneeze:

- try to stay at least 3 feet away from other people
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, then throw the tissue away
- use your upper sleeve if you have no tissue (not your hand)
- always wash your hands right away afterward.

Personal hygiene and keeping things clean

are great ways to help yourself and others stay healthy.



Washing your hands often is very important.

It can help prevent you from getting sick and spreading germs to others. Always wash hands:

- after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose
- after using the restroom
- before and after preparing food
- before eating
- before and after changing diapers
- after touching an animal or its waste
- after doing chores, such as handling garbage or doing yardwork
- before and after caring for someone who is sick or hurt.

See page 15 for simple hand-washing steps.

Disinfect shared objects and common areas.

This can help kill germs on surfaces—and keep people from getting infected. For example:

- Clean countertops and sinks in the kitchen and bathroom with disinfectant.
- Disinfect doorknobs, tables, telephones and other items that people touch often.

Follow the directions on the disinfectant label. Keep it out of reach of children. Also, be sure to wash your hands after cleaning.

Don't share personal items.

These include anything that has been near a person's mouth or nose, such as:

- toothbrushes
- drinking cups or straws
- cosmetics
- eating utensils
- washcloths or towels.

Teach children healthy hygiene habits.

Explain the importance of stopping germs.

- Make washing hands fun! Choose a song together that lasts at least 20 seconds. Sing it with your child while washing hands so he or she learns to wash long enough every time.
- Make sure children cover coughs and sneezes properly (see page 13).
- Remind children to stay away from others who are sick (while still being kind).

Model these behaviors yourself, so children can see how important they are.

Simple hand-washing steps

Have your family take care to wash hands well—every time!

1. Wet hands with warm water.



2. Lather up both hands with soap.

Regular soap is fine. Antibacterial soap may be helpful to some—check with your health-care provider.



3. Scrub hands together.

Do this for at least 20 seconds. Scrub all surfaces vigorously: wrists, palms, between fingers, under nails, backs of hands. This scrubbing action helps loosen and remove germs.



4. Rinse hands thoroughly.

Use warm, running water. If possible, use a towel to turn off the faucet when you are finished rinsing.



5. Dry hands completely.

Use a clean towel. If it is disposable, throw it away. If you have no towel, you can let your hands air-dry.



Alcohol-based hand sanitizers can substitute for soap and water.

In general, alcohol-based hand sanitizers are fast-acting germ-killers. They don't require water, so they may be particularly useful during a pandemic if water service is disrupted. They can also be less drying to skin than some soap and water. (Make sure the product you use is at least 60% alcohol.)

To use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer gel or wipe:

- Rub the gel or wipe all over both hands.
- Rub hands together until they feel dry. No water is needed.



If hands are visibly dirty, use soap and water if possible.



Practice food safety.

Proper handling of foods at all times can help keep you safe from food-borne illnesses—including avian flu.

Handle meat (including poultry) with care.

Here are some tips for avoiding the viruses and bacteria that may exist in meat:

- Wash your hands well before and after touching meat (see previous page).
- Store and prepare raw meat separately from other foods.
- Use a separate cutting board for preparing raw meat.
- After preparing raw meat, wash the board and utensils thoroughly with soap and hot water. You can also disinfect the board with a mild bleach solution.
- Don't let raw meat or its juices touch anything that will not be cooked afterward, such as raw fruits or foods that are already cooked.

Poultry and eggs are safe to eat if cooked properly.

Thorough cooking destroys germs, including the H5N1 virus (if present).

- Cook poultry to at least 165°F. Use an internal thermometer.
- Cook eggs until whites and yolks are firm.

Find out more!

If you have questions, call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline:

- 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854)
- 1-800-256-7072 (TTY).

Use common sense around animals.

Follow some basic precautions to help prevent possible infection.



It's possible to catch flu germs from an infected bird, pig or other animal.

So safety around birds and other animals is important. Also, if a person or animal is infected with H5N1 and another flu virus, the 2 viruses might mix together. A new, dangerous flu virus could be created—and start to spread.

U.S. poultry producers are working to keep domestic birds healthy.

To help prevent the spread of disease among animals, they are:

- keeping domestic poultry away from wild birds
- cleaning and disinfecting equipment and vehicles
- having employees wear clean clothing and follow strict disinfecting practices.

Report sick birds.

If you are around domestic birds, such as chickens, turkeys, ducks and geese, let authorities know if you see any signs of avian flu. Signs may include:

- sudden death
- decreased energy or appetite
- fewer eggs
- deformed or thin-shelled eggs
- coughing or sneezing
- diarrhea or nasal discharge.

Report to your local cooperative extension office—or call the USDA at 1-866-536-7593.

Be careful with wildlife.

Keep your distance from wild animals. Do not touch them. Do not pick up sick or dead wild animals.

Hunters should not handle or eat sick game. When handling game, wear rubber gloves. Wash hands, surfaces and tools thoroughly. Practice food safety with game (see page 16). Cook it to 165°F.

Talk to children.

Let them know not to play with or touch sick or dead animals. Ask them to let you know if they see any domestic birds or wild animals that look sick or are dead.

If you work with poultry,

follow all work safety regulations. For example, practice good hand hygiene by washing thoroughly and often. Wear any personal protective equipment (PPE) that is required, such as a respirator.

U.S. authorities are monitoring wild and domestic birds—and other animals—for signs of avian flu.



Create an emergency kit.

Having supplies on hand will be useful if you need to stay home during a pandemic—or during other kinds of emergencies, such as floods, hurricanes or blizzards.

Use this checklist to help you collect important items.

Drinking water

- ☐ Have at least 1 gallon per person per day. Store extra water for pets.

Gather supplies for at least 2 weeks.

(Some local officials may recommend longer.) Keep them together in a cool, dry spot. To protect food from pests and dampness, place it in large, sealable containers.

Rotate your stock.

Replace items once or twice a year—check the “use by” date on labels.

Nonperishable food

Choose items that are easy to prepare and do not need to be refrigerated. Some examples are:

- ☐ canned soup, stew, fruit and vegetables
- ☐ cereal and protein bars
- ☐ crackers
- ☐ canned juice
- ☐ peanut butter
- ☐ containers of baby food or formula, if needed
- ☐ pet food, if needed
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____



Medical essentials

- ☐ over-the-counter medication for fever or pain relief, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- ☐ extra prescription medication (talk to your health-care provider)
- ☐ vitamins (talk to your health-care provider)
- ☐ thermometer
- ☐ protective masks (may provide some protection; talk to your health-care provider)
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Personal supplies

- ☐ tissues
- ☐ toilet paper
- ☐ disposable diapers, if needed
- ☐ feminine hygiene products, if needed
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Household goods

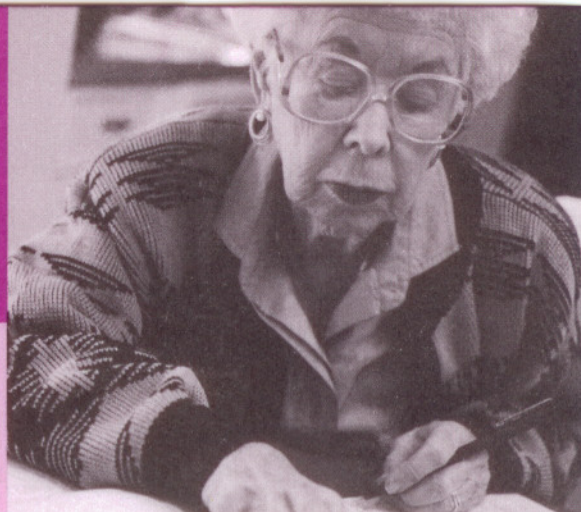
- ☐ flashlight
- ☐ portable radio
- ☐ spare batteries
- ☐ manual can opener
- ☐ soap and alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- ☐ garbage bags
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Other useful items:



Know each family member's medical history.

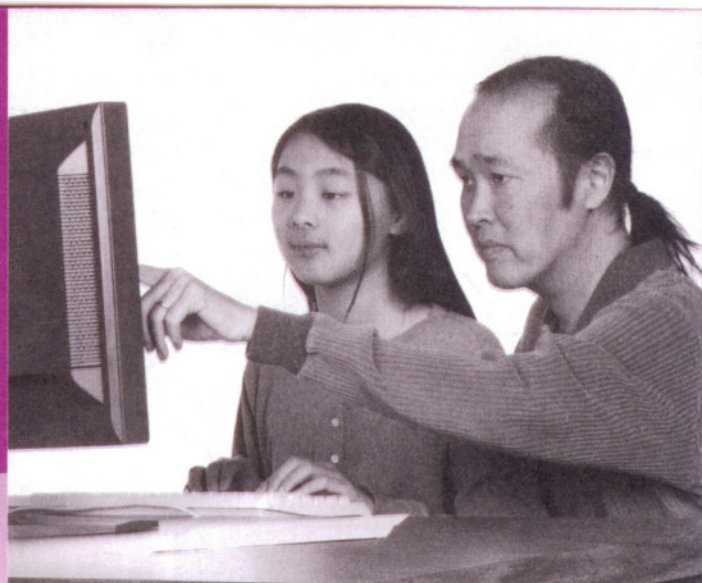
Use this chart to record conditions and needs for each person in your household. This could be useful if a temporary clinic set up for a pandemic does not have quick access to medical files.



Name	Medical Conditions	Allergies	Current Medications	Vaccines Needed
Example: <i>Grandpa</i>	<i>Asthma</i>	<i>Penicillin</i>	<i>Uses inhaler</i>	<i>Check on pneumonia shot</i>

Stay informed.

Being up-to-date is just as important as being prepared.



If a pandemic strikes,

the situation may change from day to day. Authorities will let the public know if a pandemic does start. To help stay safer both before and during a pandemic, keep track of what's going on in your area—and around the nation.

The media will work with authorities

to give you information on:

- current flu-related events—locally, nationally and globally
- available services—such as what medical centers are open
- signs and symptoms of an outbreak
- actions to take to limit the effects of the flu—this guidance will depend on the situation
- what is expected to happen in the future.

The most reliable sources of information

are public health authorities and the government Web site at www.pandemicflu.gov. Other news outlets may include:

- television news reports
- local and national radio
- newspaper and magazine stories.

Remember, some services may not be available during a pandemic. If you can't get news from the regular media, try contacting local public health officials for updates.

Local hotlines may be set up

to help inform the public during an emergency. Hotline staff may be trained to:

- deal with local questions about what to do and what to expect
- advise people on whether they should seek medical care, depending on their symptoms
- tell sick people where they can seek care. For example, special clinics may be created for quickly assessing and helping many people at a time.



Your cooperation is key!

If a pandemic is expected—or occurring—federal or local officials may make “common-good” decisions for all to follow.

Common-good decisions

are made by authorities to limit the spread of disease in a community or a nation. For the good of everyone, it’s important to comply with these decisions. Authorities may need to:

- close schools
- close businesses
- ask that everyone follow certain hygiene steps
- limit public gatherings and events where people come into close contact
- request that everyone stay home for a certain period
- limit travel—either into or out of the area.

Quarantine and isolation

are important tools for authorities during a pandemic. They can help slow the spread of an outbreak.

- Quarantine means that people exposed to a disease are kept apart from others, since they may be infected. They may need to stay at home or in a special facility for several days. The goal is to avoid the accidental spread of disease—whether or not a person has symptoms.
- Isolation means people known to be infected are kept alone, possibly in a hospital or other facility, to stop the spread of infection. The person can get specialized care in isolation—and avoid infecting others who are healthy.

Find out local plans for quarantine and isolation. (See page 30 for contacts.)

Are there special facilities where people can stay, for example? Write notes here:

Know your community's strategies and resources.



If a pandemic strikes,

your community may need to act independently. Federal or state assistance might not be available right away. Find out about plans in your area for:

- prevention of infection
- containment of local outbreaks, should they occur
- sharing emergency health information with all community members
- distributing medications or vaccines, when available
- giving out food and water to those who need it.

You can help!

Consider volunteering with a local organization to help out in emergency situations. You could help:

- plan a telephone tree to share information among people
- create a local map of key services
- organize assistance for people with special needs
- gather supplies for neighbors or other community members.

Local organizations

to contact might include:

- a community health group
- a local or national aid organization
- an emergency preparedness task force
- a faith-based organization.

Write other contacts here:

My community's plan for pandemic flu preparedness: _____



Take precautions when traveling.

Health conditions vary in other parts of the world. Here are some things you can do to help yourself stay well and avoid bringing the flu home.

Before you travel

- Check health advisories. For example, visit www.cdc.gov/travel.
- Get up-to-date on shots.
- If you have health insurance, check whether it covers you abroad. Consider buying additional insurance if needed.
- Pack a basic first-aid kit, including a thermometer.
- Take alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

While you are abroad

- Avoid contact with domestic birds, such as chickens or ducks. Avoid their droppings and blood also.
- Do not eat partially cooked poultry (which looks pink) or eggs (which look runny).
- Clean your hands often.
- If you need medical help, check with the U.S. consulate in the country you are visiting.

After you return home

- Monitor your health for 10 days.
- Call your health-care provider if you feel sick. Let him or her know where you have been and any risks for disease.

If a pandemic occurs, travel will likely be limited.

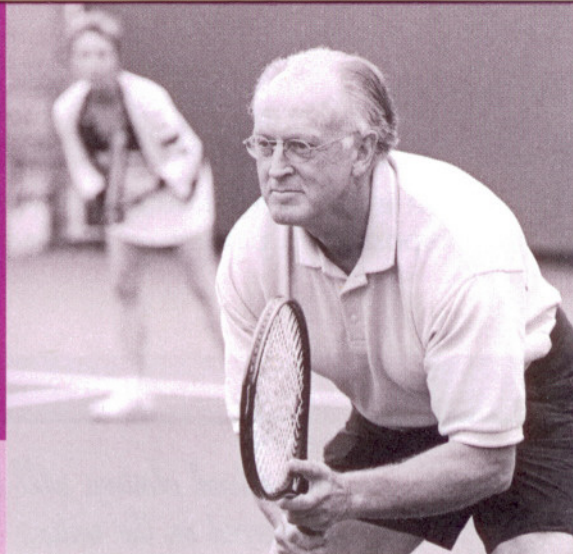
When routines must change

Write down information about how your child's school, your workplace, etc., plan to respond to a pandemic. Make your own backup plans, too.

	Emergency plan	What I can do
<input type="checkbox"/> School closure plan	<p>Example: <i>Any school closings will be announced on the radio.</i></p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Example: <i>If school closes, help Sam work through her textbooks and do reading at home.</i></p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Work plan	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Stay healthy!

Taking care of yourself can help you handle the physical and emotional impact of the flu.



Eat right.

A healthy diet combines:

- **Variety**—Different foods provide different vitamins, minerals and nutrients.
- **Moderation**—Limit fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium) and added sugars.* Make lean, low-fat or nonfat choices—for example, with milk and meats. Reading food labels can help.
- **Proportion**—For example, have more grains, vegetables and fruits than meats and high-fat foods.
- **Activity**—See the next column for tips.

For a personal nutrition plan, visit www.MyPyramid.gov or ask your health-care provider.

*Do not restrict fat for children under 2 or give cow's milk to those under age 1. Ask your health-care provider about other nutritional needs for young children.

Get enough physical activity.

The key is to find a healthy balance between the calories you eat and those you burn.

- Get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on most days of the week.
- Get 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous physical activity to help manage your weight.
- Children should get at least 60 minutes of physical activity on most—preferably all—days of the week.

Consult a health-care provider before you or a family member starts an exercise program.

Manage stress.

Thinking about a flu pandemic—or living through one—can be distressing. Take time to deal with any anxiety or fear you may feel.

- Try exercise—physical activity can help relieve tension.
- Be sure to get enough rest.
- Talk to friends or relatives. Offer each other support.
- Consider seeking help from a mental health professional or spiritual leader.

Flu treatment

Here is basic information on common symptoms and what you can do—whether the flu is seasonal or pandemic.



Seasonal flu symptoms

may include:

- cough
- fever
- fatigue
- headache
- sore throat
- stuffy or runny nose
- muscle aches.

Pandemic flu symptoms

may be more severe than those listed above. Officials will share common signs and symptoms with the public if a pandemic strikes.

If you get the seasonal flu,

check with your health-care provider about treatment. He or she may suggest:

- staying home to avoid spreading it to others
- taking antiviral medication
- drinking lots of fluids
- getting plenty of rest.

Pandemic flu treatment

may be similar. Again, officials and health-care providers will give specific recommendations once a pandemic has begun. In general, stay away from others when you are sick.

Treating others with the flu

Here are some basic guidelines:

- Keep the person away from others as much as possible. For example, have him or her stay home in a separate room. Limit visitors.
- Follow health-care provider instructions. Ask about wearing masks for protection.
- Give medications if prescribed and available.
- Have the person throw away used tissues immediately—place a container nearby.
- Wash or sanitize your hands often, especially after caring for the sick person.
- Avoid holding soiled laundry too closely.

Never give aspirin

—or any medication containing aspirin or “salicylates”—to anyone under 20 (unless directed by a health-care provider). Aspirin and salicylates have been linked to Reye’s syndrome, which can cause brain damage or death. Ask a health-care provider what medication is safe to use.

Talk to your loved ones

about the flu and how you can be prepared.



Help children feel safe.

Let children hear about pandemic flu from you. Remain calm and stick to the facts.

You can also:

- reassure children that you're there to care for them
- encourage your child to talk about his or her feelings or fears, and listen carefully
- discuss ways you can help others together. Taking action can help raise confidence!

If a pandemic does occur, try to keep up children's normal routines as much as possible, such as regular meals and bedtimes.

Monitor the news.

News of a pandemic may overwhelm children and cause them to worry a lot. Know what your children are seeing and hearing in the news. Discussing current events together can help your child understand the facts behind the headlines. You may also wish to limit your child's exposure to the news, depending on his or her age.

Talk about good hygiene.

Remind all household members that there is a lot they can do to help stay healthy at home. Discuss frequent hand washing and other ways to decrease the risk of infection.

Communicate with loved ones outside of your household.

Compare your plans for dealing with a pandemic. Talk about any special needs they may have during an emergency. If you can, help them prepare based on the suggestions in this handbook.

Consider how you will get in touch if transportation and communication are temporarily disrupted.

When you talk about planning for emergencies, try to stay calm. Focus on the practical things you can do to get ready now.

Flu pandemic checklist

Use this page to keep track of your preparations for a possible pandemic.



- ☐ Store enough food for 2 weeks. Also store pet food, if needed.
- ☐ Store drinking water to last at least 2 weeks (1 gallon per person per day). Have extra for pets.
- ☐ Store enough medical essentials, personal supplies and household goods for 2 weeks.
- ☐ Talk to your loved ones about pandemic flu.
- ☐ Talk to your child about healthy habits, such as covering coughs and sneezes and washing hands often.
- ☐ Learn home treatment for flu.
- ☐ Chart each family member's medical history.
- ☐ Ask your health-care provider about the yearly flu shot for you and your family members. Arrange to get shots as needed.
- ☐ Practice food safety—especially with raw meat and poultry.
- ☐ Ask about flu pandemic plans at your child's school and at any organizations you belong to.
- ☐ Find out about your employer's plans for a flu pandemic, and what would be expected of you.
- ☐ Find out about flu pandemic plans in your community or state.
- ☐ Make backup plans for possible school or work closures, or other disruptions.
- ☐ Consider volunteering to help community response efforts.
- ☐ Encourage and help family, friends and neighbors to prepare.
- ☐ Identify reliable sources of up-to-date health news.
- ☐ Plan for safe travel—check advisories.
- ☐ Be cautious around wildlife and domestic birds.



For more information

about preparing for a flu pandemic, contact:

Local sources

These include your:

- health-care provider
- local or state health department
- local or state emergency management office
- local offices of disaster-relief agencies, such as the American Red Cross
- public library.

Write local Web site addresses and phone numbers here:

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

- www.pandemicflu.gov
- 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)
- 1-888-232-6348 (TTY).

Other national agencies

These include the:

- U.S. Department of Homeland Security
www.ready.gov
1-800-BE-READY (1-800-237-3239)
1-800-464-6161 (TTY)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
www.fws.gov
1-800-344-WILD (1-800-344-9453).

You can also visit the World Health Organization's Web site at www.who.int.



You can help protect yourself— and others—from pandemic flu!

Be aware

of the risk of a flu pandemic and how the flu virus may spread.

Take steps

to get ready for a pandemic and make backup plans.

Plan to cooperate

with authorities to help prevent or limit the impact of pandemic flu.

Practice healthy habits

and teach them to children. Everyone can help keep germs from spreading.

Stay informed

about the current status of pandemic flu.

Take the time to prepare responsibly for a possible flu pandemic. It's worth it!



To **prepare** for a possible flu pandemic, the Macomb County Health Department is...

- Developing its response plans, including plans for mass vaccination
- Working with hospitals, emergency medical services, law enforcement, and other community partners
- Monitoring disease outbreaks for the first signs of a pandemic

If a pandemic is declared, the Macomb County Health Department will try to **prevent** its spread and **reduce** disease, death, and social disruption through...

- Community education
- Issuing orders/recommendations regarding isolation, quarantine and social distancing
- Distributing vaccine and antiviral medications, when available, at mass vaccination clinics
- Coordinating response activities
- Providing support to healthcare partners
- Conducting disease surveillance
- Implementing a mass fatality response plan

This workbook outlines useful steps you can do to prepare for a possible pandemic. We hope you find it helpful.

Remember, the most important **things you can do** are...

- Practice good hygiene
- Stay home when you are sick
- Follow the guidelines of health officials

FOR MORE SPECIFIC INFORMATION, VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.macombcountymi.gov/publichealth